(b) whether it is also a fact that maximum retail prices of drugs produced in non-exempt States are lower than those produced in tax holiday States; and

(c) if so, how Government propose to save the patient's interests?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) to (c) As per the present Pharma Pricing Policy, the 74 bulk drugs specified in the First Schedule of the Drugs (Prices Control) Order, 1995 (DPCO, 95) and the formulations based thereon are under price control and their prices are fixed /revised by the National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) in accordance with the provisions of the DPCO, 95. These drugs have been kept under price control on the basis of criteria mentioned in 'Modifications in Drug Policy, 1986', announced in September, 1994.

Prices of non-Scheduled formulations are fixed by the manufacturers themselves keeping in view the various factors like cost of production, marketing expenses, R&D expenses, trade commission, market competition, product innovation, product quality etc. The NPPA monitors the prices of medicines as per monthly Retail Audit Reports of ORG-IMS Research Pvt. Ltd. The Government takes corrective measures where the public interest is found to be adversely affected.

National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) has not conducted any study regarding prices of medicines in the excise free zones. If MRP printed on the product label of any Scheduled formulation pack manufactured in excise exempt zones is found to be higher than the notified price (excluding excise duty), if will be considered to be a case of overcharging and necessary action will be taken as per the provisions of the DPCO 1995 for recovering the overcharged amount.

Availability of gas as fuels in chemical fertilizer plants

†3683. SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH MAJITHA:
SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:

Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(a) whether it is a fact that the availability of gas as fuel is decreasing in the units producing chemical fertilizers in the country;

(b) the status of the availability of gas separately during the years 2004-05, 2005-06 and the first quarter 2006-07; and

(c) the reasons for shortage in availability of gas?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) to (c) The availability of domestic natural gas for use in manufacture of area is declining due to increasing demand of various consumers and due to depletion of old gas fields. The availability of natural gas for fertilizer sector during 2004-05 was 23.79 Million Metric standard Cubic Metres per day (MMSCMD). With the commencement of supplies of re-gasified liquefied natural gas (RLNG) from 1.4.2005, the availability of natural gas and RLNG during 2005-06 increased to 28.477 MMSCMD against the requirement of 36.42 MMSCMD for existing gas based units. As the first quarter of 2006-07 is not yet over, no data for this period has been compiled.

Use of naphtha as a fuel in chemical fertilizer plants

†3684. SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH MAJITHA:
DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI:

Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Gas and Naphtha are used as fuel oil and other fuel in the chemical fertilizer producing units in the country;

(b) if so, the names of fuels being used primarily in these units in the country, and

(c) the percentage of each fuel being used in the units established in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) to (c) Natural gas, naphtha, fuel oil (FO) and low sulphur heavy stock (LSHS) are primarily used as feedstock and fuel in the manufacture of urea. Out of the total production

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.